GEELONG NATURALIST

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MAY 1999

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COMING EVENTS

MAY

4	General Meeting		Chris Harty	"Mangrove Ecology"
9	Biodiversity Group Excursion	*	Ocean Grove Nature Reserve	
11	Plant Group Meeting			Discussion on plants from last excursion
16	Excursion	*	Wombat State Forest	Leader: Ade Foster Dennis Greenwell
25	Bird Group Meeting		Chris Tzaros	"Birds of the Murray"
26	Biodiversity Group	*	Workshop Meeting	'Fungi"

* CHANGES TO PROGRAM
\+ ADDITIONS TO PROGRAM

THE GEELONG FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INCORPORATED

A0013708R

Membership Renewal

1999/2000 Subscriptions are due on 1st April

YOUR SUPPORT IS VALUED
Please renew now !

Please ignore this notice if you are a Life Member, if you have already Paid, or if you joined after 31st December, 1998

Name: Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. .....

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..... Postcode..... .....

Contact Phone Number: .....(B) .....A./H..

SUBSCRIPTION .... $.....

DONATION .... $.....

TOTAL .... $.....

PLEASE TICK TYPE OF SUBSCRIPTION:-

( ) 1998 Geelong Bird Report (if posted $5)		$ 4.00
( ) Supporting	(includes Monthly Publications)	$37.00
( ) Ordinary	(includes Monthly Publications)	$27.00
( ) Joint / Family	(includes Monthly Publications)	$37.00
( ) Junior/Student (under 18 yrs)	(includes Monthly Publications)	$ 6.00
( ) Corporate (club, organizations)	(includes Monthly Publications)	$32.00
( ) Subscriber to Monthly Publications only		$22.00

( ) Donation

( ) Please send Receipt (only posted on request)

*Supporting Membership includes $10.00 Donation

Help make a friend a member!

POST to: HONORARY TREASURER, G.F.N.C., P.O. Box 1047, Geelong 3220

A0013708R

ALL MEMBERS . . .

My Particular Interest is.....

Please share that special place you know, or that speaker who we all must hear.

Your suggestions for activities/speakers may be listed here or on the special "Excursion/Speaker Suggestions" forms available at meetings.

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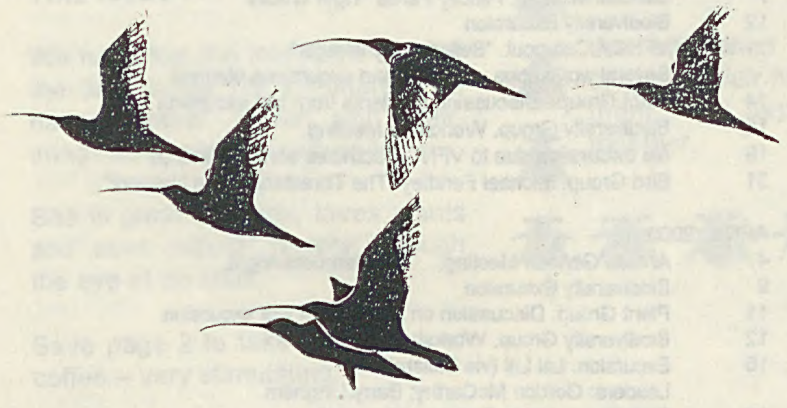
GEELONG FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB Inc.

WELCOMES VISITORS and NEW MEMBERS

We are fortunate to live in an area containing some of Australia's richest and diverse ecosystems. We appreciate our natural environment and look forward to sharing this enjoyable interest with **visitors and new members** at Club activities. There are over 70 organised events for you to become involved with.

Geelong Field Naturalists participate in
- conducted field trips to local areas of natural significance
- illustrated presentations by leaders in natural environment subjects.
- bushland, coastal and alpine campouts
- flora and fauna surveys
- conservation projects
- exhibitions displaying aspects of our local environment

Many of us are learners and observers, some are experts in their fields.



Since 1961 our Club has been influential in protecting the diminishing natural environment. We are actively involved in the development and management of many local Reserves and Parks; tree planting and environmental weed control are ongoing projects. We carry out flora and fauna surveys for various authorities and environment groups. Our fine record on conservation issues has earned the respect of government and community organisations.

We meet at 8 P.M. at Karingal Community Centre, Cnr. McKillop and Humble Streets, East Geelong, where we have four monthly group activities.

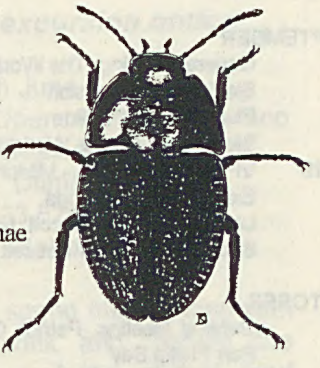
General Meeting:- Usually an illustrated talk by specialists on a wide range of natural environment subjects, e.g. land forms, plants, birds, animals, insects, marine/aquatic/shore life, stars/planets, rocks, weather, earthquakes, etc., followed by discussion. Members are encouraged to share their nature study observations and bring items to put on our specimen table for exhibition and/or identification. **1st Tuesday of month.**
Contact: Barry Lingham Ph. 52554291

Plant Group:- Members share and develop their knowledge of plants in a relaxed and friendly way at discussion sessions and field trips. **2nd Tuesday of month.**
Contact: Dick Southcombe Ph.52433916

Bird Group:- Specialist speakers, bird counts, identification of species, sharing and discussing observations of birds and bird behaviour . **3rd Tuesday of the month.**
Contact: Barry Lingham Ph.52554291

Biodiversity Workshop Group:- From Arachnids and Amphibians to Zooplankton and Zebras; in fact anything that is not a bird or plant. **Wednesday after the Biodiversity excursion.**
Contact:Dennis Greenwell Ph. 52437047

Details of dates and Club activities are listed on the reverse of this page. Complete information details are published in the "Geelong Naturalist" (GFNC monthly publication) in the month prior to the activity



Heleini Sp., Tenebrioninae

STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

(1) To stimulate the study and appreciation of natural history by:
(a) Lectures, discussions and excursions to areas displaying features of ecological interest
(b) Taking part in ecological surveys and field studies from time to time.

(2) To preserve and protect Australian Flora and Fauna

(3) To issue statements and comments on proposals regarding the management of areas of ecological significance, in order to aid the conservation of natural resources and the protection of endangered species and habitats.

(4) To faithfully record information, to disseminate knowledge and to act as a source of information and opinion on matters relevant to the Association's purposes.

MEMBERSHIP RATES 1998/99

All members receive copies of the Monthly "Naturalist" magazine at meetings or by post.

Supporting member	$37.00	Ordinary member	$27.00
Joint/Family member	$37.00	Junior/student member	$6.00
Corporate member	$32.00	Subscriber to monthly publications only	$22.00

Annual Geelong Bird Report $4.00 ($5.00 if posted)
Extra donations gratefully accepted

A receipt will be posted if requested. **Make cheques payable to the Geelong Field Naturalists Club Inc.**

Please complete the details on the reverse of this tear-off slip .

GEELONG FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INC.

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES 1999/2000

JUNE 1998
1 General Meeting. Dave Renton "Mosqitoes"
6 Biodiversity Excursion
8 Plant Group. Plants of Arid Areas
9 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting
12,13,14 Campout. Bendigo Area
Leader:David King
15 Bird Group. David Geering "Regent Honeyeaters"
20 Excursion. Werribee Zoo
Leaders: Diana Primrose; Rohan Bugg

JULY
6 General Meeting. Kath Ralston "Lichens"
11 Biodiversity Excursion
11-12 Winter Wader Count
13 Plant Group. Dune and Estuary Plants
14 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting
18 Excursion. Warrnambool Whale Watching
Leader: Valda Dedman; Alison Watson
20 Bird Group. Margaret Cameron "Sahara & Sahel: Mali Birds"

AUGUST
3 General Meeting. Members Night.
8 Biodiversity Excursion
10 Plant Group. Vascular Systems
11 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting
TBA Boneseed Pull; You Yangs
15 Excursion. Brisbane Ranges - Ted Errey Walk
Leader: Dick Southcombe; Roy Whiteside
17 Bird Group. Merilyn Grey "Tne Noisy Miner - a Problem Bird"

SEPTEMBER
7 General Meeting. The Work of Trust for Nature
12 Biodiversity Excursion
14 Plant Group. Orchids
15 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting.
15-19 VFNCA Campout - Mildura
19 Excursion. You Yangs
Leaders: Trevor Pescott; Ray Baverstock
21 Bird Group. Trevor Pescott " A Year at Forrest"

OCTOBER
5 General Meeting. Patrick O'Callaghan "The Ecology of Port Phillip Bay"
TBA Boneseed Pull; You Yangs
10 Biodiversity Excursion
12 Plant Group. Plants of the Brisbane Ranges
13 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting.
16-18 WVFNCA Campout.
17 Excursion. Angahook - Quoll Territory
Leaders:Donna Wood; Friends of Angahook
19 Bird Group. Ian Morgan "Birds of the Wimmera"

NOVEMBER
31/1/2/3 Campout. Bambra Bush Leader: Graeme Tribe
3 General Meeting. N Schleiger "Geelongs Geology & Landforms"
7 Biodiversity Excursion

November continued next column

NOVEMBER continued
9 Plant Group. Plant Dissection.
10 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting.
16 Bird Group. Gordon McCarthy "Birds of the Bannockburn Bush"
21 Excursion Geelong Geology- Bluestone, Sandstone & Limestone"
Leaders:Noel Schleiger

DECEMBER 1999
5 Challenge Bird Count
7 General Meeting. Members Night.
12 Biodiversity Excursion
14 Plant Group. Geelong Botanical Gardens

JANUARY 2000
15 Saturday 1/2 Day Excursion. "Jerringot Wildlife"
Leader: Bird Group
18 Bird Group. Finding more of our hard birds [Team effort]
22-26 Campout. Howqua River
Leader: TBA
TBA Summer Wader Count.

FEBRUARY 2000
1 General Meeting. Peter Moulton "Ecological Burning"
6 Biodiversity Excursion
8 Plant Group. Freshwater Marsh Plants
9 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting.
15 Bird Group. Craig Morley "Birds from the Inside Out"
20 Excursion. L. Victoria & Buckley's Park
Leaders: Margaret Cameron; Marilyn Hewish

MARCH 2000
7 General Meeting. Felicity Farris "Tiger Quolls"
12 Biodiversity Excursion
11-13 VFNCA Campout. "Bellarine Peninsular"
Several workshops, activities and excursions planned
14 Plant Group. Discussion on plants from last excursion
15 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting.
19 **No excursion** due to VFNCA activities earlier in month
21 Bird Group. Michael Fendley "The Threatened Bird Network"

APRIL 2000
4 Annual General Meeting. Members Night.
9 Biodiversity Excursion
11 Plant Group. Discussion on plants from last excursion
12 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting
16 Excursion. Lal Lal (via Ballarat)
Leaders: Gordon McCarthy; Barry Lingham
18 Bird Group. Valda Dedman "Pigeons"

MAY 2000
2 Gen. Meeting. Gordon McCarthy "Bannockburn Bush Flora & Fauna"
7 Biodiversity Excursion
9 Plant Group. Discussion on plants from last excursion
10 Biodiversity Group. Workshop Meeting
16 Bird Group. Mike Carter "Seabirds off the Western Vic. Coast"
21 Excursion. Inverleigh Common and nearby Reserves
Leaders: Dennis Greenwell; Mark Trengove

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Please detach and forward to : THE HONORARY TREASURER, G.F.N.C Inc, P.O.Box 1,047, GEELONG 3213
See over for subscription rates.

NAME Dr./Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms_____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____

Contact Phone _____ (B) _____ (A./H.)

Type of Membership

Supporting Member ☐ Ordinary Member ☐
Joint/Family ☐ Junior/Student ☐
Corporate Member ☐ Publications Only ☐
Geelong Bird Report ☐ Bird Report Posted ☐

Donation $_____ Please send receipt ☐

TONIGHT'S SPEAKER

The speaker is Chris Harty and his subject is "Mangrove Ecology"

Chris Harty (B.App.Sci (Planning), Grad. Dip. Urban & Regional Planning) is the Manager Environment & Planning with the Corangamite Shire. He has worked in New South Wales and in Gippsland where he has been involved in coastline and estuary management. Chris wrote and published the book "*Mangroves in New South Wales and Victoria*" as part of the Fish Care Program to provide information on ecology and management of these important habitats.
(See http://www.dpie.gov.au/fish/action/index.html for internet viewing)

□

This issue . . .

We have lost the inimitable Joe for the time being but fortunately we have another writer with flair, imagination and her own style.

She is great on birds, loves plants and sees natural history through the eye of an artist.

Save page 2 to take with a cup of coffee – very stimulating.

Read where Valda Dedman finally admits to walking on water.

Did you know that the drawings in this issue were all done by the contributors? Congratulations to Ade, David and Valda.

Next issue Dennis Greenwell tells what sounds like a fishing story of 150 mm spiders in Grovedale. By next month, like the days, it may be a little shorter.

□

RENEWAL NOTICES

All members will receive a notice this month. Kindly disregard it if you have already paid your subscription.

□

News of the month . . .

The big club news is the wedding of Dennis and Claire Greenwell, held on May 1st at Balyang Sanctuary.

A number of members joined with family and friends in a very moving ceremony. The Balyang residents' loud quacking showed their approval of the union.

The overcast morning turned into a lovely sunny day for Claire.

We all joined the happy couple at their home to wish them a happy future together.

☺

CHANGE OF MEETING DATES

- starting from June (New Club Program)

Bird Group will meet on the **THIRD** Tuesday of the month

Bio-diversity Group will meet on the Wednesday after the excursion on the first Sunday of the month.

These changes will help take the pressure off contributors meeting deadlines for copy to be delivered to the Naturalist and the editor.

Please make a note in your diaries.

Meetings in May are unchanged.

□

EXCURSION NOTICE
. . . Ade Foster

Club Excursion - May 16
Wombat State Forest

Leaders - Dennis Greenwell and Ade Foster.

We will leave the clubrooms at 9.00 am sharp. A bus will be available if required. Please add your name to the form on the table tonight. Cost will be $5.00.

We will stop for morning tea at Bacchus Marsh then on to O'Brien's Crossing for lunch. The bushland here is in particularly good condition at the moment. Come along and enjoy.

□

Advance excursion notice . . .

Sunday 20th June.
Werribee Open Range Zoo and Point Cook Coastal Park.
Leaders: Diana Primrose
Tel: 03 5240 1811 A.H.
Rohan Bugg

We plan to spend the morning with a guided walk and 'behind the scenes' tour of the animal feed houses. There will be free time to walk trails, have lunch, view State Rose Garden as desired.

Cost: $18 per adult, $14 concession, $10 child with 10% discount for 20 or more people.

We will complete the day at Point Cook Coastal Park.

We are considering taking a small bus for those without their own transport (cost $5) - otherwise private cars. We will ask for an indication of interest tonight.

Further details will be in the June newsletter.

□

Bio-diversity Group . . .

Details of the next meeting and excursion are on page 7.

□

OUT AND ABOUT WITH VALDA
. . . Valda Dedman

Joe's Legacy, You Yangs, Mice, Fungi, Reedy Lake, Currawongs, And ...

At the Editor's request I've inherited this site. You'll miss Joe's quirky humour. He has left me a few things to tell you about from his favourite You Yangs. Go up to the "Stockyards" area and see Little Dumpy, the Brittle Greenhood, in flower. Also both pink and white Parson's Bands, and Sweet Hound's Tongue (ponder on that name). Joe was ecstatic about three Bluebell species, including *Wahlenbergia luteola*, whose petals are blue inside and yellow on the outside.

Another good You Yangs spot is Big Rock — **Great Walk 1**

Park near the toilets and first take a look at the Harlequin and Creeping Mistletoes on the Sheoak there. You might see a Mistletoebird too. The male is Shiny blue-black with red bib and underpants, female is grey with pink underpants. Then follow the track up on to the big rock and take in the view over Geelong and the bay. You'll be standing on Devonian granite 350 million years old and looking down on basalt plains only about one million years old. Both formed from volcanic outpourings. See if you can find the Austral Stork's-bill growing in a rock crevice, admire the lichens, liverworts and mosses, peer into the aboriginal rock well, then come down and take the trail around the rock. The boneseed will depress you (pull a few if you feel like it), but the rock fern is great. So is the necklace fern, high up in a seepage on the rock face.

Half way around the rock, detour to the dam to check up on the tadpole situation. I did this walk two days after the deluge in March. Pobblebonks were calling and plopping into the water. Already there were rafts of foam full of frog spawn. Fungi had popped up all over the place — tiny transparent umbrellas, thick clumps of yellow or white gilled varieties, huge brown boletus.

Retrace your steps to the circular track and you'll end up back at the picnic tables. White-throated Treecreepers will probably greet you.

It's fungi time. Found an almost perfect specimen of *Amanita ochrophylla* at Ocean Grove Nature Reserve. Pale yellow gills, stem bulbous at the bottom, perfect annulus (ring of flesh) hanging from it. I wasn't tempted to eat it. One sniff and the whiff of stale ants was enough to put me off.

I've had an invasion of mice in the kitchen. They have even chewed the tips out of my wooden spoons, which tasted of everything from curry to plum jam. Opportunistic little critters. I remember how House Mice were the first mammals to reappear after the Ash Wednesday fires. Of course there are much better native mice in the Otways, although we're unlikely to see them. The New Holland Mouse *Pseudomys novaehollandiae* lives around Anglesea, in open woodland of *Eucalyptus baxteri* with a low dense heath understorey and is probably Victoria's most threatened mammal species. There are only three records in the Otways for the The Smoky Mouse *Pseudomys fumeus* since it was first found at Olangolah in 1933, but it's still safe in the Grampians.

Taking part in the Reedy Lake survey meant I ended up walking on water -- inside my gumboots. This happened where the Streaked Arrowgrass *Triglochin striata* was growing with its larger cousin, Water Ribbons, *T. procerum*.

Arrowgrass - *Triglochin*

- name comes from the Greek for three arrowheads (projections on the carpel, or female part of the flower)
- leaves of semi-aquatic Streaked Arrowgrass can be flattened or cylindrical, 30 cm long.
- produces 2-100 minute greenish flowers on long spike.
- tiny fruit looks streaked.
- other local species are Dwarf *centrocarpum* 4-12 cm,Tiny *minutissimum* 1.5-4.5 cm, Prickly *mucronatum* 2.5-9 cm.
- TIny and Prickly grow in coastal saltmarsh.

Where can I find the smaller species?

Other good things at Reedy were Whistling Kites with young on a nest, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters moving through, mixed flocks of Goldfinches and White-fronted Chats, and the Dwarf Flathead Gudgeon that Dave found in the river. Under the microscope its silver goggles and its wide, spotted, smiling mouth were revealed. Not so good were the enormous carp, pink mouths gulping for air below the Breakwater. One big flood and they'll be back in Reedy Lake.

The Currawongs are back in town. I suppose you've heard them. They don't only say 'currawong', but have a wide range of calls, including a wolf whistle and a sort of 'elephant tears' wail. See how many different sounds you can pick out. I saw 80 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos flying over my Highton house the other day. Joe recorded 80 White-winged Choughs at the You Yangs. Can anyone top that?

And ... Ravenous Ravens in apple trees, Ibis out in the paddocks probing for crickets, OBPs and Silvereyes back from Tassie, Flame Robins on fence posts, lots of lorikeets, ballooning spiderlings, lawyers wigs growing on grassy roundabouts. Look for them all

Coprinus comatus
Lawyer's Wig or Shaggy Cap

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
. . . Barry Lingham

May 1999

Welcome to the GFNC New Year! Your new committee has met for the first time, but unfortunately there are no new faces on the committee.

The Geelong Advertiser last weekend carried the news of the unfortunate decision by the State Government to fund the proposed new rowing complex on the Belmont Common. Many of our members have been involved in a long and protracted campaign to convince the City of Greater Geelong plus local politicians of the folly involved in siting the complex in this 'green centre' of Geelong. I am amazed that such an expensive and destructive enterprise would be seriously considered in this era when most people are attempting to preserve the green spaces in our city areas.

The issue has now escalated due to this new decision; I urge those of you who feel deeply about the future of this issue to become involved in making your voice heard.

Valda Dedman has raised other issues of concern – Alcoa are to gain title over a section of leased Crown Land near Corio Bay and a subdivision of farmland along the Barwon River near Pollocksford threatens to put extra pressure on the environment along the river.

The Club will also write to the Minister for the Environment protesting at the annexation of part of the Alpine National Park at Mt McKay to be used for ski runs. There appears to be concerted pressure on our most precious public asset – our state owned land.

Included in this issue of the Naturalist is a copy of the new Club Program. We have endeavoured to provide a wide range of topics and activities to stimulate, educate and provide enjoyment for our members. Thank you to those who have volunteered to act as excursion or campout leaders, speakers or coordinators. Please let these people know of your appreciation when you attend an activity.

A member of the "One Fire" group who is researching the history of Stewart's Reserve has contacted me. This area was set aside as a camp for the last of the Wauthorong clan during the 19th century. It is hoped to list the natural history of the reserve. Any bird lists or plant lists would be most appreciated. Please contact me if you can help.

The planning of the Environmental Expo for 1999 is now well advanced. Please note the dates in your diary:

Setup- Wed afternoon, June 2nd
Thur, Fri – School visits
Sat 5th– Open to the public
Mon – School visits
Tue 7th morning – Clean up.

The main activities and displays will be located in the Deakin Woolstores Campus, but some excursions will take place on the Saturday.

The official opening will take place on Thursday 3rd of June. The Minister, Mrs Marie Tehan will open the Expo, followed by the keynote speakers. Some refreshments will be available prior to the opening.

We hope to have members of the GFNC leading several activities aimed at both school children and adults. If you can spare half a day or more, please contact me or Alison Watson to allow your name to be recorded. The more people we can involve, the more successful the event will become. □

This issue . . .

Four pages have had to be cut from this issue to enable inclusion of the club program and renewal notice.

My apologies to late contributors whose material had to be either a little cramped to fit in the available space or left out. □

Annual General Meeting . . .

At the AGM in April the following office-bearers and committee members were elected.

President	Barry Lingham
Treasurer	Ray Baverstock
Hon Minute Sec.	Donna Wood
Committee	Ade Foster
	Diana Primrose
	Graeme Tribe
	Alison Watson

We congratulate these members and hope that all members will rally to assist them in this club year.

The following positions remain vacant:

Vice President
Secretary
Committee member (2).

Alban Lloyd-Jones
Membership Officer. □

Insensitivity is not the word for it . . .

'Gaia' (originally from Greek mythology, the princess of the earth) has, since James Lovelock first stated the idea in 1972, come to mean 'the earth seen as a single physiological system'.

The underlying idea is that every life form on the planet interacts with every other life form, even if only in a very minute way. He goes as far as to say that the movement of a butterfly's wings in Amsterdam would be felt all the way around the globe. I like to see it less specifically as 'the spirit of the earth'.

One day, when heading out for a day's sailing I passed a ship waiting for a load of wood-chips at North Geelong. Imagine my feelings when I noticed that some insensitive owner had named the ship "Forest Gaia". □

PLANT GROUP REPORT
. . . Rachel Keary

Meeting report, April 13.
'Thompson's Creek Wetlands'

I am the Water Watch person on six sites on or around Thompson's creek and so the plants look familiar, but their names are not. This Plant Group meeting is a chance to use other people's brains and put names to some of these plants.

I start by digging up some water ribbons *Triglochin procerum*. The spade slices through the muddy surface into water. No wonder I'm slipping.! The *Phragmites australis* (I know that name for the common reed!) is in flower so I collect a piece and go digging in the mud and slush for some roots. Beside me is a garden of small plants – on the mud – water buttons *Cotula coronopifolia,* buttercups *Ranuncula sp.* And carrot weed.

Try another site; under a red gum or two, avoid the scratches of hedge wattle *Acacia paradoxia* and the gorse to a grassy bank open to the western sun. The pink flowers of the fat hen *Chenopodium sp.* looked quite pretty a week ago, but it is very weed-like. The rushes are very brown and dry but I salvage some seed heads *Juncus kraussii.* It would be nice to put a name to the odd looking grass with a rhizome and upright shoots with the leaves opposite. It is the Australian salt grass *Distichlis distichophylla* which is not surprising since Thompson's Creek is brackish with a series of salt and fresh springs.

Then to an open paddock on Ghazeepore Road. With the low water level in this drought period there is quite a wide mud area. First there is a tiny plant showing off its blue-pink flowers – Monkey flower *Mimulus repens* and then, something unusual that looks almost like Sarcocornia with its segmented leaves. This could be *Lilaeopsis polyantha* and it does not seem to have a more friendly name. Beyond the mud is a small stream with the water just flowing, and in the water is a grass-like plant with very fine leaves and shiny white fruit floating on the surface; it loses its beauty as soon as it is out of the water. This is a Ruppia species and it likes salt water. There are some rushes growing between the rocks thrown in beside the road by the council. Here the water is deeper and it is quite hard to get a sample of the rushes without moving the rocks. They are *Bolboschoenus* species with triangular stems and deeply ridged leaves and bulbs. Collection at this site is not complete without the grass that nearly injured my knee when I crawled under a nearby fence last year. This is *Distichlis* again, but in this exposed site the shoots are quite short and the sheaths over the nodes have some nasty sharp points on them, don't I know!

At the May meeting there will be a discussion on the origins of plant names both common and botanical. All members are invited to contribute. □

Have you heard of a Yellow-tailed Yellow-Cockatoo?

On Ian McNamara's radio program *Australia All Over*, 3LO 11/4/99, 'Joe' (an ex-CSIRO employee, now 'professional ornithologist' and author) spoke of an **all-yellow** Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo.

Apparently the bird has been at Wauchope (just inland from Port Macquarie, NSW) for the past four seasons when the birds come to the conifers at the local golf-course between December and March.

This female bird has now paired up with a normal coloured male but as yet there is no evidence of their mating. The people have taken the bird to their hearts and it is almost a local icon. The caller said "woe betide anyone who tried to harm the bird" He also claimed that the species was increasing in the eastern states which he puts down to their ability to adapt to exotic conifers.

On 18/4/99 a caller from Ballarat said that among the 300 or so seen there between April and September, one is a yellow bird and he wonders whether it is the same bird.

Our members' records show sightings as early as January 6 and as late as December 8. □

BIO-DIVERSITY EXCURSION
Inverleigh Common - 11/4/99
. . . Ade Foster

Four members met just after lunch on Fern Track and walked for some distance in the very warm sunshine examining whatever we could find. Buttercups and *Wahlenbergia* were in flower, and we found quite a few greenhood orchids, although, which species I am unsure. White-eared Honeyeaters were calling loudly and persistently and there seemed to be good numbers of them about.

Along the track we came upon a swift moth pupa, Hepialidae, sticking half out of the soil. It would seem that this moth had attempted to emerge the previous night, but for some reason was unable to complete the process. It was being attacked by tiny brown ants, so we 'rescued' it, hoping it would fully emerge that night. We set up the insect down near the Banskias, then had a barbecue tea and lively debate about the definition of 'native' plants.

As darkness fell we started the UV lights, then took our spot-lights and walked along the tracks to see what we could find. The beams uncovered many sleeping birds ... magpies, Magpie-larks, White-plumed Honeyeater and Red Wattlebird, and two good -sized brushtail possums. We saw three sugar-gliders, and had a particularly good view of one which was fossicking among the leaf litter on the ground. As we approached it climbed up the nearest tree, which was only about 4 metres tall. It sat there for a while, then, deciding we were too close, jumped into space and glided to the base of a large eucalypt about twenty metres away and swarmed into the canopy where it promptly disappeared.

Meanwhile the UV lights were attracting quite a good variety of the local insect fauna, with beetles, moths, flies, mantids, and lace-wings making up the majority. Les's battery and my generator ran out at about the same time, so we packed up at about 11.00 pm. □

HAIRY CICADA

TETTIGARCTA CRINITA

by Ade Foster

Ade Foster, 8 Hazel Street, Belmont. 3216

On a recent trip to Apollo Bay, Les Barrow and I captured a most unusual member of the Cicada family while insect trapping with UV lights.

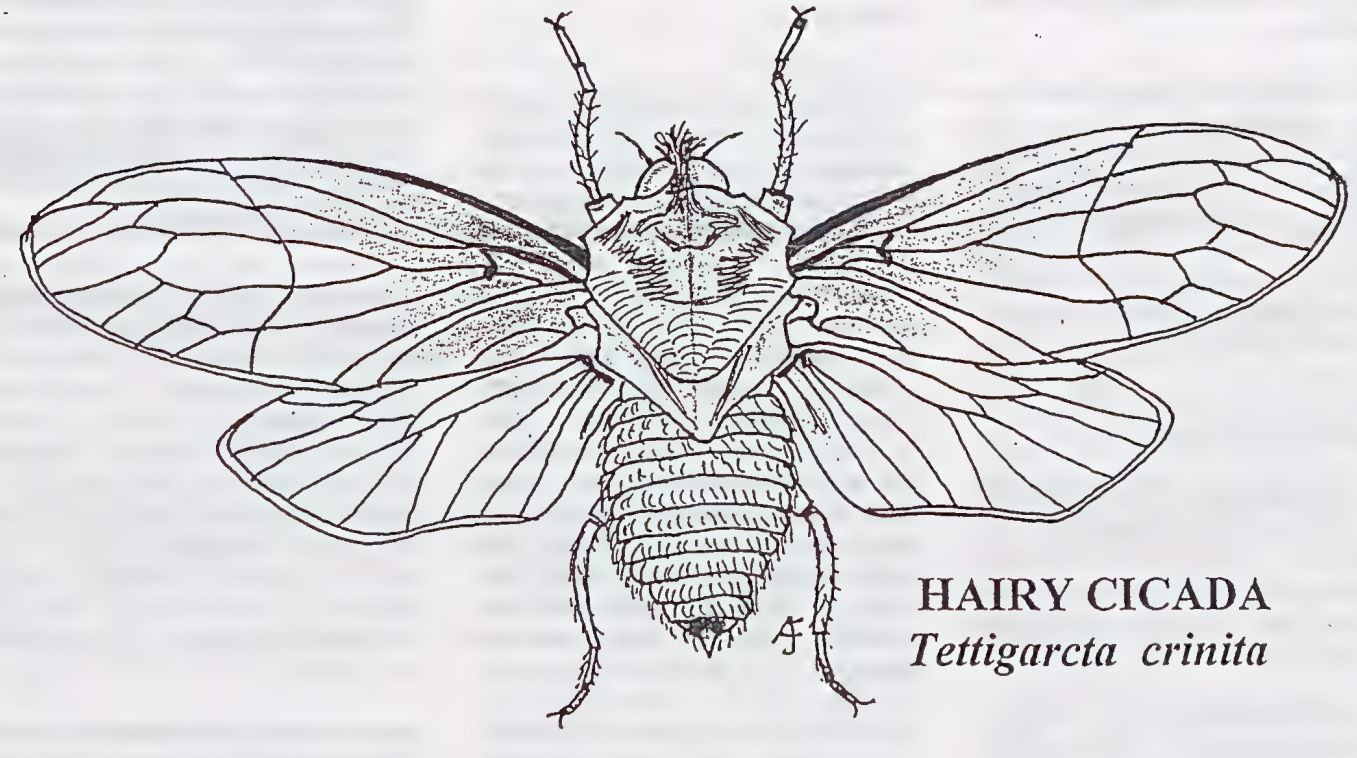
The Hairy Cicada, *Tettigarcta crinita*, is a high country species found in the mountains of New South Wales, the ACT and Victoria west into the Otways, and usually occurring above 1,200 m. Most specimens have been taken in forests supporting snow gums, *Eucalyptus pauciflora* or mountain gums, *E. dalrympleana*. It is also found in wet sclerophyll forests with large eucalypts and abundant tree ferns, such as the ranges behind Apollo Bay. The only other member of the genus, *T. tomentosa*, is found only in Tasmania.

The Hairy Cicada is primarily dark brown, with a tan coloured wash on the fore-wings, and a yellowish tint to the base of the hind-wings. As the name suggests, the body is covered with long, blackish hairs especially on the abdomen and underside of the thorax. The eyes are pale brown. Our specimen had a wingspan of 85 mm and body length of 35 mm.

Hairy Cicadas rest by day under the bark of trees, always aligned vertically, but head may be up or down. They tend to use shelters which are free of other insects and spiders. They become very active at dusk and fly into the hours of darkness. Ours were taken at about 10.30 PM. some two hours after dark. They can stand very low temperatures, and are often found right through winter, even amongst the snow in Tasmania. Eggs are laid on Eucalyptus, and larvae emerge after dark, from January to May, but mostly in February and early March. Adults suck the sap of eucalypts.

The Hairy Cicada, and its Tasmanian relative are incapable of producing sound, either in the audible or high-frequency inaudible (to humans) ranges. While both males *and* females possess the tymbals used by other cicadas for sound production, they are very poorly developed. It is believed that Hairy Cicadas may practice sound communication via low intensity vibrations which are felt through the plant on which the cicadas are situated. This is widespread in other *Homoptera* like the leafhoppers and planthoppers, but is yet to be proven to exist in the cicadas. How they attract mates from a distance remains a mystery.

Reference: Moulds, M.S. , *Australian Cicadas*, NSWU Press. 1990



MEETING REPORT

. . . Roy Whiteside

Report of talk given by Peter Codd at the member's night meeting on 6 April 1999 on the subject of the CORANGAMITE CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY.

Peter Codd is the Programme Manager for Land with the CCMA. He was introduced by GFNC member, Robert Missen, who is one of ten members on the CCMA Board which also includes a representative from the Department of NR&E.

The CCMA is one of nine similar authorities throughout Victoria which have resulted from the 1994 Catchment Protection Act. The Corangamite region covers an area bounded by the Ballarat to Geelong regions to the east, along the coast from Queenscliff to Peterborough to the south and Camperdown to the west. The four basins involved are Moorabool, Barwon, Otway and Corangamite.

Waterway management is a new initiative for the Western District and rivers are starting to get some attention.

The degradation issues that have the greatest impact on the economic, social and environmental values of the region are pest plants, pest animals, bio-diversity decline, ground water quality, changed land use, water erosion, eutrophication (over-enrichment with nutrients) and fire.

The main programmes and highlights of CCMA involve

1. SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION which involves working with farming groups to advance sustainable land management practices with minimal environmental impact.

2. WATER RESOURCES involving
(a) improvement to water quality particularly in water supply catchment areas by planting in riparian zones.
(b) Flood plain management
(c) determination of threats to ground water and applying controls.

3 BIO-DIVERSITY CONSERVATION involving
(a) protecting habitat diversity by managing native grasslands, improving quality of indigenous vegetation, removing environmental weeds.
(b) protecting species by revegetation, controlling feral animals in areas containing vulnerable species and identifying species listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act.
(c) using fire as a management tool to enhance remnant grassland and heathland areas.

4 COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND LANDCARE SUPPORT by increasing public awareness and community ownership of resource management.

5 CATCHMENT AND LAND PROTECTION by ensuring a clean, healthy and unique environment that supports individual lifestyle aspirations and community well-being.

6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION of all research and remedial projects and establishing a methodology for assessing regional catchment health indicators.

TARIFF.
$8 million dollars has been directly allocated to Catchment Management Authorities from the State to improve the health and water quality of Victoria's waterways. The tariff within the Corangamite Catchment area is levied at $32 for properties valued at below one million dollars. For properties valued at above one million dollars an additional charge of .005 cents in the dollar is applied to the Capital Improved Value above one million dollars up to a maximum charge of $500. The tariff, raised under the Water Act (an Act of Parliament), will fund specific works within the catchment area.

SPECIFIC WORKS include revegetation of stream sides, improving water quality, reducing algal blooms, reducing salinity, reducing flood impact, improving urban water quality and placing of litter traps in storm water systems. Commonwealth funds have been applied mainly to the rural areas and, in particular, for revegetation. Funds are being allocated to some 112 successful projects which involve 43 individuals, 42 Landcare groups and 27 partnerships with existing groups.

Some examples of conservation groups represented in the Geelong region are involved at Barrabool Hills/Stonehaven, Buckley Falls, Barwon Heads, Swan Bay, Lake Connewarre, Moorabool Valley, Barwon River (Breakwater/ Connewarre), Cowies Creek and urban Geelong.

Barry Lingham gave a vote of thanks to the speaker.

□

BIO-DIVERSITY MEETING - 24 / 3 / 99

. . . Dennis Greenwell

We again had a varied collection of specimens. Ade brought along the Swift Moths and Hairy Cicada that he had collected at the Apollo Bay Campout. Les and Shirley had what at first appeared to be a gall, but, upon further examination, was found to contain a number of weevils. With a little imagination, they could almost have been miniature Kiwis! These weevils are a species which live inquiline in galls. This means that they make use of galls formed by another creature, eating the body of the gall, and finally pupating within it.

There was also a good selection of the beetles which Les has collected recently, and which Shirley is learning about by means of attempting to catalogue them. Dave brought along a number of true bugs (Hemiptera) often popularly referred to as Frog Hoppers and a small parasitic Braconid wasp. This, Dave had set in such a way, as to show the needle sharp ovipositor. (Normally, this is obscured from view, being enclosed in a sheath.)

An 'anonymous' member had a human head-louse, common to all of us who have been to or had kids at school. A fascinating, yet unsettling addition to the evening.

□

KNOW YOUR JERRINGOT PLANTS

by Valda Dedman

69 North Valley Road, Highton, 3216.

The first of a series of thumb-nail sketches

Common Reed *Phragmites australis*

Those reed beds you see along much of the Barwon River banks are actually composed of a giant perennial grass with creeping rhizomes. The pale or purplish fluffy plumes waving in the late summer or autumn breeze are flower heads

Phragmites australis is a widespread semi-aquatic plant that lives in brackish sites, but can tolerate quite saline conditions. Like all grasses it has cylindrical jointed stems and long leaves with parallel veins and a sheathing base. They are alternate, grey-green and glabrous*, tapering to a fine point, to 60 cm long. The stems are rigid, with many nodes, and up to 3 m high.

Common Reed
Phragmites australis

Beds of phragmites prevent streamside erosion and act as a filter for toxic substances, so are an important component of wetland systems.

They provide nesting habitat for water birds. such as moorhens and swamphens, cover for Reed Warblers and Little Grassbirds. Crakes and rails sneak in and out about their roots.

At Jerringot there is a fine phragmites stand along the drain leading east out of the southern wetland. The plant can become invasive, so we must keep an eye on it.

The Kooris used the stems as spears, or cut them into pieces and threaded them on to string to make necklaces. Baskets were woven from the leaves. The soft white underground shoots are said to taste like bamboo shoots.

Word for your plant dictionary
**Glabrous* – Smooth, without hairs

□

BIODIVERSITY CAMPOUT

Apollo Bay - 6 - 8/3/99

. . . Dennis Greenwell

Five 'regulars' from the Biodiversity Group, were joined by a couple of visitors David and Mary, at our Labour Day Campout at Apollo Bay this year. Our main objective was to visit an area of old growth forest that we had tried to find on two previous occasions known as the "Big Trees." On this occasion, we not only had detailed maps and verbal instructions on how to find them, but a Global Satellite Positioning device courtesy of David.

After about a kilometre walk along the fire access track at the end of Killala Road, we came upon the first of the yellow ribbons which was the beginning of the track in.

This was the hardest part of the walk, trying to scramble up the almost vertical slippery bank. Special mention must be made of the efforts of Ade Foster, who without regard for his own comfort, made himself into a human stepping stone, to enable everyone to get to the top!

Having arrived at the top of the bank we all set off, following the trail of ribbons and after a hard hour's trek, the trail ended. There were certainly a lot of *tall* trees, but we had imagined that they would be at least 10 metres girth. These trees were perhaps 6 or 7 metres only. However, we were satisfied that at last we had achieved what we had set out to do.

We also took the opportunity that night to see what the moth attracting lights would bring in. We had hoped to do some astronomy whilst waiting for the moths to arrive, but it was overcast. Instead, we decided to take the spotlights to see if we could find any of the animals that we had heard making so much noise on previous occasions and which we suspected were Yellow Bellied Gliders. Unfortunately, we were not able to see any, but we heard them some distance away and David, who regularly goes on spotlighting expeditions, assured us that our identification was correct.

The moth collecting was more fruitful than the spotlighting however and by the end of a couple of hours, we had several new species of Swift Moth (Hepialidae) and a most unusual Cicada covered in hairs and which, we later discovered was, not surprisingly, called the Hairy Cicada.

□

BIRD OF THE MONTH
. . . Valda Dedman

Rufous Fantail

Name Rufous Fantail *Rhipidura rufifrons*

Description Small brown bird with long fan-shaped tail. Rufous eyebrow, lower back and tail base. Throat and underparts white, separated by black band shading to scaly black below.

Similar Species Grey Fantail

Length 15-16 cm.

Voice *Descending* squeaky *song* (Grey Fantail has *ascending* song)

Food Mainly insects

Habitat Wetter forests. Undergrowth.

Range Coastal N., E. and SE Australia. North-south migrant. Some reach Papua New Guinea. Rare in Tasmania.

Geelong Passes through urban areas March-April and November. Breeds in Otways Nov-Feb.

Nest Neat cup of bark fibre with tail. Bound with spider web

****

Graham Pizzey called it a "darting flame", Brigadier Hugh Officer wrote of "sheer enthralment" when watching "this little sprite of a bird flitting through the tree fern or scrub with the sun illuminating the rufous of back and tail to a flaming red". Percy Wood waxed positively lyrical in the Geelong Advertiser of 20 March 1948:

> *"Can you imagine a smallish golden brown bird like a painted butterfly, his every movement revealing many changes of delightful colouring. Meanwhile the exquisite fan opened and closed in unison with the rapid movements of the dainty wings, revealing a beautiful rust red colour from head to tail. His throat was pencilled with black and gold, his wings golden brown, and the body the same rich colour; the ventral and under tail a lovely rich fawn. A bunch of animated beauty, now on the ground, anon among the foliage, and short sorties after flying insects. Never for one second was he still. And after a visit of 20 minutes, away went the ball of golden brown out of sight; but never, while life lasts, will the memory fade of that delightful experience."*

Rufous Fantails visit Geelong gardens on their northwards migration in autumn and again about November, when they come south to breed -- deep in the Otways. The nest is often near water, in fern gullies. They are birds of the shade and dense thickets.

" Can you imagine a smallish golden brown bird like a painted butterfly"

Perhaps that is why they sometimes come right indoors.

Charles Belcher caught one in his kitchen in March 1910 and the previous year one had been hopping about, very tame, inside Dalgety's woolstores' show-floor. There is also the tale of a bird lover visiting a second-hand bookshop in the heart of Sydney and being shown a "brownish-looking sparrow" flitting about "looking for bookworms". It turned out to be a Rufous Fantail.

Graham Pizzey recalls how one flew into the classroom during a maths lesson at Geelong Grammar in the late 1940s

> *" ... ignoring flying balls of screwed up paper it darted about catching flies above interested heads from which all thoughts of maths had fled".*

Rufous Fantails need vegetation with a continuous canopy and closely spaced perches. They take much of their food in the air but are not as acrobatic or active as Grey Fantails. They will sometimes feed on the ground. They are very fond of crane flies and their diet also includes jumping spiders, plant-eating bugs and beetles.

In the dim light of the under-canopy the bright flame of the rump and fanning tail may act as a visual contact signal and may also startle insect prey.

The song of the Rufous Fantail is not as tinny as that of the Grey Fantail. Sometimes their presence is revealed by a sharp *'tsi-tsit'* call, among the highest audible sounds in the bush.

Belcher never saw more than one bird at a time and then nearly always in company with Grey Fantails.

The first Rufous Fantail in Club records this year was on 21 February, by Marilyn Hewish at the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve, and in March Barry Lingham saw another there. Local records include the You Yangs, the Brisbane Ranges. and the Long Forest All these birds were probably passage migrants.

If you want a chance of seeing a Rufous Fantail, take a walk during April through Eastern Park. They have been noted regularly in the Park since Belcher's day.

And if you have a patch of dense shrubbery in your garden, watch out over the next few weeks for a brilliant flash of red-gold. It will be gone in a few hours or even minutes, and will not reappear for another six months. But you will have experienced the delights of a Rufous Fantail.

□

Which bird has the most records in the 1998 observations ?

You probably have an idea already ; it must surely be the club favourite because it has been so often recorded over so many years.

To find out, have at a look at the end of the observations on page 12, but no cheating please, I want your answer first. -Ed.

□

THE ORCHARD SPIDER

by Dave King

Unit 216/86 Church Street, Grovedale, 3216.

Introduction

This spider has the honour of having several common names, these are Orchard Spider, Death's Head spider and Bird-dropping Spider, the latter two names based on appearance of the spider. Its scientific name is *Celaenia excavata,* and is one of the members of the family Argiopidae, commonly called Orb-weavers, though in this case, *C. excavata* does not in fact weave an orb-web, nor any type of snaring device, it being what is described as an ambusher.

Description

C. excavata is a three-clawed spider with eight eyes arranged in a pattern typical of the Argiopidae with all eyes being of equal size :-

O O
O O
O O
O O

The female is one of the larger spiders found in south-eastern Australia. The male is an unspectacular 2mm long. The body shape and colouring gives rise to the name Bird-dropping spider. Its habit is of resting on a leaf in a hunch- backed way with anterior legs tucked close to its body and colour pattern representative of a bird-dropping. At night it will remain on the leaf, but have its anterior legs extended forward to grasp any flying insect that approaches too close. In most cases the prey is a moth which has led to the hypothesis that the spider emits a pheromone that mimics that of the female moth, thus attracting the male moth to the spiders deadly grasp

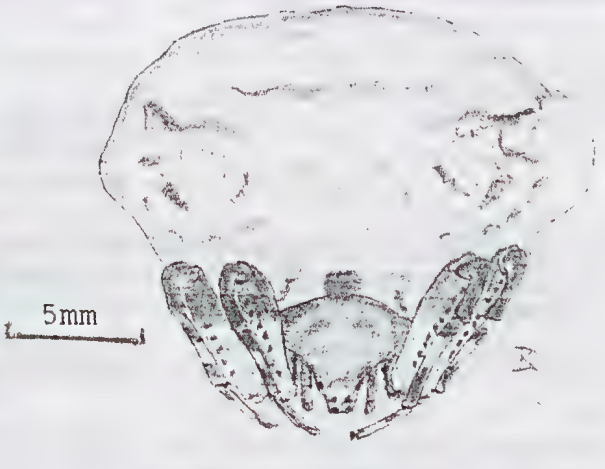
The femur of the anterior pair of legs, on their ventral surface, have a series of tubercles surmounted by a short spine. These obviously provide a means of securing the prey in a grasp reminiscent of that found in the Praying Mantis.

Another feature of this spider is the type of egg case produced. They take the form of a sphere the size of a large pea, with a dark brown rigid envelope. Some half dozen of these egg cases may be produced over a period, all held in a cluster by a silk net attached to the foliage, the female always present close by. Illustrated is the female in gravid condition immediately prior to the production of the first egg case, following which the abdomen takes on a shrunken appearance with considerable furrowing and creases. She will produce further egg cases dependant upon the amount of prey she is able to capture in order to replenish her former condition.

Hatching will occur in some weeks, largely dependant upon climatic factors and whether parasitation has taken place by one of the wasps that specialise in this behaviour. The wasp will penetrate the egg case with its hypodermic-like ovipositor and lay its eggs within. The resulting grubs will then feed on the eggs and spider hatchlings.

Acknowledgment

The writer is grateful to Robert De Bakker who, wishing to satisfy his curiosity, supplied the subject specimen. It was collected in a Highton garden.



Celaenia excavata

LIBRARY NOTES
. . . Betty Moore

Vegetation of Buckley Park Foreshore Reserve – Feb 1999.
A detailed study prepared for Barwon Coast Committee of Management as part of Coastcare Community Program.

Wingspan Vol.9 No.1 (Birds Australia) "See How They Run" by Graeme Chapman is about Bristlebirds, the three species of which are in trouble. The Rufous Bristlebird, *Dasyornis broadbenti* is the one most likely to be seen in our area. The species occurs in a coastal strip from near Anglesea to the mouth of the Murray River in South Australia and also in some places in the Otway Ranges as far inland as Colac.

An article by Walter Boles about bird fossils concerns the extent to which the origins and evolution of our native bird species are revealed by Australia's bird fossil record.

"Renaissance on Lanark" by Graeme O'Neill tells how John and Cicily Fenton and their family have, over forty years, transformed their once ravaged sheep property of 800 ha situated in Victoria's Western District back into an ecologically and agriculturally sustainable property. They did this through diversification of traditional grazing and cropping, with large-scale farm forestry and the restoration of natural habitat. A recent bird census includes almost all the species estimated to have been present in the region in pre-European times – a really fascinating account.

Peninsula Plants Vols 1 and 2 have been donated to the library by the authors Kathie and Peter Strickland who, having met several of our members on the Baw Baw plateau, realised our interest in native plants and hoped that the group would find the books useful. They are field guides to the indigenous plants of the Mornington Peninsula suitable for cultivation. (Much of the information is also applicable to the Bellarine Peninsula.)

These two very interesting and useful books set out with both common and botanical names, descriptions enhanced by line drawings. They will be a great help both in identification in the field and to anyone wishing to try growing these plants in their own gardens

Australia NATURE Autumn 1999 has the usual collection of interesting articles. In it you can read about frogs, ibis, moths, humans and dinosaurs, bandicoots, rabbit virus and possums.

Did you know that 90% of a chimpanzee's genes are the same as ours?
A beautiful Photoart section features moths by Paul Zborowski. □

BIODIVERSITY CAMPOUT
Apollo Bay - 6 - 8/3/99
. . . Dennis Greenwell

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BIRD GROUP REPORT
. . . Barry Lingham

No Bird Group Report was received this month. □

JUMPING BLACKBIRD
. . . Valerie Lloyd-Jones

On a steep bank of the Waurn Ponds creek I observed a female blackbird jumping up approximately 30 cm (one foot) from the ground to feed on the orange berries of Hawthorn. It looked quite strange as it repeated this activity quite a few times before flying off. □

Bird and Bio-diversity Group meetings change in June.

TURNIX DO ROCK

. . . John James

Amazing what you see if you hang around long enough. Last week I observed a 'rail-like' bird crossing our track in a most bizarre fashion – rather what you would expect from a graduate of John Cleese's 'Ministry of Silly Walks'.

I thought at first it was advancing three steps forward and two steps back.

Mystified, I rang an eminent Geelong 'birdo' who suggested I look up Button-quails, who he said "were a group of known rockers".

Sure enough on page 148 of the "Reader's Digest" big bird book they said that some species of Turnix were known to rock and no real explanation had been advanced for this behaviour.

So my new bird was probably a Painted Button-quail. True, I did not see the chestnut on the side of the neck, but my wife did the following day. Maybe she saw the female which is bigger and brighter.

I see that the latest books list Button-quails well away from other birds and I am sure that any respectable bird would be pleased about this, considering its aberrant behaviour. The male even allows his wife to initiate dalliances with other males, whilst he stays home to bring up the children. And as for having only forward facing toes. Well, I ask you?

□

OBSERVATION REPORTS

-- compiled by Barry Lingham.

Observations were submitted by Alban Lloyd-Jones (ALJ), Graeme Tribe (GT), Reginald Walsh (RW), Gordon McCarthy (GMc), Brian Hart (BH), Terry Crockett (TC), John Newman (JN), Joe Hubbard (JH), Debbie Evans (DE), Valda Dedman (VWD), Craig Morley (CMo), Rachel Keary (RK), John Bottomley (JB), Jocelyn Calvert (JCa), Margaret Wadsworth (MW). Thanks also for the other records that could not be included in the Naturalist.

April is a great month for bird watchers and this year has been particularly productive. It is great to see the return of Little Penguins to Corio Bay. Valerie and Alban noted them during a recent sailing day. We have had few bay records since the irruption some years ago.

At this time of year, Hooded Plovers often congregate in small flocks. Look for them at Lake Victoria, Lake Murtnaghurt and Breamlea. It is pleasing to see that some of last years chicks are still about.

John Newman kept an eye on nest activity from the pair of Black-shouldered Kites at Jerringot. We are particularly keen to have reports of any nesting activity at Jerringot. The report of a Black Kite at Fyansford shows that these birds, normally found north of the divide, are visiting our region. Look for the forked tail that swivels to allow the bird to change direction when gliding.

The Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos have been recorded throughout Geelong, but the beautiful Major Mitchell Cockatoo is only found in the Mallee. The bird seen by Craig Morley at Queens Park must be an aviary escapee.

Speckled Warblers are found locally in the drier areas. John Bottomley was surprised to find a dead bird on his balcony near Anakie. It appeared to have hit a window, despite the decals of falcons that John has attached to deter birds from flying into the windows. The specimen is being sent to the museum.

A large influx of honeyeaters into our region has occurred during April. Yellow-faced and White-naped have been seen in flocks. A most unusual honeyeater is the Fuscous reported by Craig at the Lower Stony Creek picnic ground. This fits the pattern of winter visits to the Brisbane Ranges noted by Mr Boyd Wykes who carried out a study through Monash University some years ago. (Ref: *Birds of Geelong* T. Pescott). Look for a bird similar to a White-plumed Honeyeater, but with dusky , yellow-tipped ear coverts.

We have also had a return of many of the robin species. The most unusual is the report from Terry Crockett at the You Yangs. She saw the bird in the Eastern Flat area which is also a favourite habitat for Flame Robins.

Do yourself a favour and make a trip to some of these terrific local sites to marvel at our Autumn birds.

The lorikeets are very noticeable currently as they speed from one blossoming eucalypt to another. If you have a good ear (like Craig Morley) you can distinguish the high pitched metallic calls of the Little Lorikeet from the 'zit zit' of the Purple-crowned and the deeper notes of the Musk. The loud raucous screech of the Rainbow is easily distinguished.

We have had very few reports of swifts so far this year; John and Jocelyn saw some at Anakie, but not in the larger flocks of 100+ that have been noted around Geelong in previous years.

Cobbledicks Ford on the Werribee River has been the site of many interesting observations by Rohan Bugg over the years. The Zebra Finches are often seen there. Their main stronghold is the plains around the Werribee area.

Over the next month, look out for the return of the Flame Robins, Orange-bellied Parrots, Double-banded Plovers and the other birds that winter in our area.

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

Little Penguin	5	31/03/99	Corio Bay. 1,000 m off St Helens.	ALJ
Royal Spoonbill	26	13/04/99	Barwon estuary. Unusually large flock.	GT
Banded Lapwing	1+	23/04/99	East of Little River on Little River Road.	RW
Hooded Plover	5	23/04/99	Breamlea	GMc
	6	28/03/99	Lake Victoria. Five adults and one juvenile.	BH
	5	20/04/99	Lake Victoria	TC
Black-fronted Plover	3	7/04/99	Jerringot. Breeding record. One adult and two chicks.	JN
Red-necked Avocet	41	17/04/99	Moolap.	JN
Black-shouldered Kite	2	5/03/99	Jerringot. Nesting in casuarinas at north end. On nest 6/3. Still on nest 14/3. Pair flying 25/3 but nest gone.	JN
Black Kite	1	14/04/99	Fyansford	GMc
Grey Goshawk	1	9/04/99	Newtown. White morph.	JH
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	45	21/04/99	Deakin University Mangement Centre. Feeding on ground on Hakea drops.	DE
	60	17/04/99	Eastern Park flying to East Geelong.	JN
	3	31/03/99	North Valley Road, Highton	VWD
	3	11/04/99	North Valley Road, Highton	VWD
	80	20/04/99	North Valley Road, Highton	VWD
	22	22/04/99	North Valley Road, Highton	VWD
	100	29/03/99	Eastern Park	CMo
	9	8/04/99	Ballarat Road at Anakie turnoff.	CMo
	3	12/04/99	Newtown	CMo
	3	15/04/99	Newtown	CMo
Major Mitchell Cockatoo	1	15/04/99	Queens Park. Assumed to be an escapee.	CMo
Southern Boobook	1	4/04/99	Mt. Duneed.	RK,MK
Barn Owl	1	22/04/99	North of Balliang on Bacchus Marsh - Staughton Vale Road.	JB
Owlet Nightjar	1	3/04/99	Inverleigh	BH
	3	13/04/99	Bannockburn bush.	GMc
Speckled Warbler	1	1/04/99	You Yangs. Northern end of Stockyards.	JH
	1	27/04/99	DeMotts Rd. Anakie. Found dead on balcony.	JB, JC
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	1	2/04/99	Newtown. First record this season	CMo
Fuscous Honeyeater	1	12/04/99	Lower Stony Creek picnic ground. Unusual in this area	CMo
White-naped Honeyeater	20+	9/04/99	Queens Park. Many immatures. Also White-plumed and Yellow-faced present.	CMo
	10+	16/04/99	DeMotts Road, Anakie. Only seen intermittently.	JB
	3	2/04/99	First record this season	CMo
New Holland Honeyeater	7	6/04/99	Newtown. All had hairs from a Lambs Ear plant. Eventually one flew off with a beak full of the hairs.	JH
Pink Robin	2	21/04/99	Ocean Grove Nature Reserve. Both brown	TC,BH
	2	23/04/99	Stan Lewis Walk, Highton. Both brown	JN
Flame Robin	1	10/04/99	Bannockburn Bush.	J&VCo
	2+	28/03/99	Lake Victoria	BH
Scarlet Robin	7	1/04/99	You Yangs. 5 Male, one female, one immature	JH
Red-capped Robin	1	23/04/99	You Yangs, Eastern Flat.	TC
Rufous Fantail	1	early April	Edwards Point	VWD
	1	5/04/99	Newtown	VWD
	1	5/04/99	Highton	VWD
Pied Currawong	4	7/04/99	Newcomb. Not seen in area before. Also seen 9/4/99	MW
White-winged Chough	60	9/04/99	You Yangs	JH

□

□

This should not be taken as an indication of the relative abundance of species. We all love raptors and eagerly record sightings but when it comes to the 'little brown bird' way up in the canopy and 'up-sun' as well, we tend to move on, except for Craig Morley. —Ed.

The answer . . .

Once again it is the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo by a margin which a politician would love. The most popular were:

Records	Birds
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	38 983
Australian Hobby	19 20
Gang-gang Cockatoo	19 140
Wedge-tailed Eagle	18 133
Little Eagle	15 23

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